

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 992
By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Scott Tallent of
Maryville.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause in its deliberations to recognize and honor those exceptional Tennesseans who, when faced with the anguish of a most tragic experience, have held themselves up as exemplars of inextinguishable friendship to the entire State and to the Nation; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable man from our State is Scott Tallent, whose boyhood friend, Stan Ballard, succumbed to mouth cancer a few days before Christmas in 2005, after a valiant fight of the initial diagnosis and four devastating reoccurrences; and

WHEREAS, intent upon addressing Stan Ballard's deep concern that his medical bills were forcing him to leave behind a family deeply in debt, Scott Tallent indubitably illustrated the biblical scripture which refers to "laying down one's life for another" by working tirelessly to answer phone calls and e-mails from across the country to raise money for the Stan Ballard Fund, all the while knowing that his friend was about to die; and

WHEREAS, Scott Tallent and Stan Ballard met in the first grade at school, where they quickly became best friends; they lived within close proximity of each other's homes, and spent most evenings and weekends in the Tallents' driveway playing basketball; and

WHEREAS, Scott Tallent and Stan Ballard attended Eagleton Elementary School, Eagleton Middle School, and William Blount High School together, both graduating in 1984. After high school, Stan went on to Roane State Community College on a basketball and baseball scholarship, later transferring to Maryville College, where he would meet his future wife, Lisa; Scott attended East Tennessee State University (ETSU) and graduated from the

University of Tennessee, and made many trips to Roane State to visit his friend on the weekends; and

WHEREAS, while Stan and Lisa were at Maryville College, Scott and his future wife, Donna, attended University of Tennessee; the couples dated almost every weekend, building a precious and lifelong friendship which would sustain the four of them during the years to come; and

WHEREAS, after college, the two families stayed in touch; Stan Ballard, his wife Lisa, and their children, Chassidy and Micah, have lived in Oak Ridge, Oliver Springs, Morristown, and Maryville, while Scott Tallent, his wife, Donna, and their children, Wesley and Caylor, have remained in Maryville; and

WHEREAS, while time often separated the two families, they have remained close, and have always been there for each other, sharing a genuine friendship through many tough times; even now, after Stan Ballard's passing, Lisa will often be found visiting the Tallent's home, finding comfort in the friendship that began with two six-year-old boys, and has grown and withstood the test of time; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard never chewed tobacco or smoked, yet he was a victim of mouth cancer; he faced his initial diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma and endured four reoccurrences of the disease over a ten-year period, handling each setback with a positive attitude and unflagging faith in God and the care and support of his family; and

WHEREAS, near the end of his friend's life, Scott Tallent organized a fundraiser to facilitate reaching a goal of \$100,000 to honor Stan's dying wish to relieve his family of the debt incurred during his ten-year battle with cancer; he ultimately raised \$130,000 in Stan Ballard's final six weeks, thereby exceeding the amount needed to wipe out his friend's medical bills; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard witnessed and appreciated the great extent to which Scott Tallent and his other friends demonstrated their love for him, remarking that he was among those fortunate enough to "actually see the end of his life"; and

WHEREAS, knowing the significance of what his beloved friend, Scott Talent, had done to help his family, Stan Ballard was content to "sit back and watch God take over," and he died just a few days after the financial goal had been met; and

WHEREAS, Scott Tallent leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity in all his chosen endeavors, a legacy which will live on through the friendship he made throughout life; and

WHEREAS, the members of this legislative body, like all Tennesseans, are inspired by the loving actions and generous heart of Scott Tallent; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to recognize the efforts of this exceptional human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Scott Tallent, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his capacity for love, his meritorious efforts on behalf of his childhood friend, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.